

Regular Session, 2006

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 17

BY SENATOR MARIONNEAUX

CONDOLENCES. Expresses condolences upon the death of Navy Chief Petty Officer Jacques J. Fontan.

A RESOLUTION

To express the sincere and heartfelt condolences of the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana to the family of Navy Chief Petty Officer Jacques J. Fontan upon learning of his death in combat in Operation Enduring Freedom.

WHEREAS, Chief Fontan was a native of New Orleans, born on Veterans' Day, graduating from Brother Martin High School and attending the University of Louisiana at Lafayette; and

WHEREAS, Chief Fontan ultimately decided he could best serve his country by becoming a member of the armed forces, enlisting in the United States Navy and earning the highly coveted trident badge of the Navy Seal after completing the extremely demanding training at the Naval Special Warfare Center in Coronado, California; and

WHEREAS, Chief Fontan subsequently was assigned to Seal Team Eight and Seal Team Ten, respectively, where he distinguished himself with his tremendous focus and determination that he always gave to the details of his mission; and

WHEREAS, Chief Fontan and other members of Seal Team Ten were deployed to Afghanistan to participate in America's war on terrorism and take the fight to enemy forces using the region's rugged terrain to operate from; and

WHEREAS, Chief Fontan was 36 years of age when he and seven of his comrades

1 engaged heavily armed enemy soldiers, June 28, 2005, during an attempt to rescue a four-
2 man seal team on a reconnaissance mission in the remote mountains of the northeastern
3 province of Konar; and

4 WHEREAS, Chief Fontan and his seal team members bravely and without hesitation
5 flew into the bullet and rocket-swept area where the recon team was pinned down under a
6 withering barrage of fire; and

7 WHEREAS, Chief Fontan, other rescuers and the large, troop carrying MH-47
8 helicopter began to draw more enemy fire as the aircraft flew low in an attempt to save the
9 trapped seals; and

10 WHEREAS, an enemy-fired rocket propelled grenade struck the aircraft during the
11 intense fighting, mortally wounding Chief Fontan and his seven fellow seals as well as
12 killing eight United States Army special operations troops also aboard the rescue ship; and

13 WHEREAS, the fighting became so fierce that three of the four trapped seals were
14 killed in the ground action as well as all aboard the chopper, bringing the terrible toll to
15 eleven for the elite Navy forces, their single biggest loss in one day in their forty-year
16 history; and

17 WHEREAS, Chief Fontan was a true hero and highly decorated warrior, earning
18 nearly thirty awards during his career, including the Bronze Star Medal and the Navy
19 Commendation Medal, both for valor in combat, the Purple Heart and the Combat Action
20 Ribbon.

21 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana
22 does hereby extend its most sincere condolences to the family of United State Navy Chief
23 Petty Officer Jacques J. Fontan from a grateful state and nation.

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
25 family of Chief Fontan as a symbol of the Senate's grief and in honor of that family's
26 sacrifice and loss in the United States of America's War on Terror.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Heyward Jeffers.

DIGEST

Marionneaux

SR No. 17

Expresses condolences upon the death in ground combat of U.S Navy Chief Petty Officer Jacques J. Fontan.